

SOVA

Our Mission

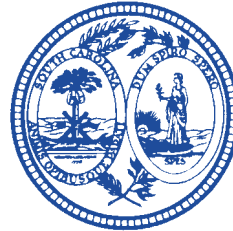
In the interest of justice to all victims of crime whose injuries, pain, suffering and loss warrant our intervention and support, the State Office of Victim Assistance will:

Promote collaboration at all levels, in order to restore justice to eligible crime victims who are in need of advocacy and financial assistance.

Provide a network environment in which we work closely with victim service agencies and providers across the state, to render advocacy, support, programs, services, information, referrals, training and technical assistance, thereby ensuring that together we are equipped to meet the needs of South Carolina's crime victims.

Practice a community and victim centered approach to proactively end violent crimes statewide and assist crime victims and their families in need.

By providing compensation to victims of crime who are eligible and meeting the educational, training and professional needs of victim advocates, health care professionals, South Carolina schools and victim service providers, the State Office of Victim Assistance seeks to ensure that South Carolina's crime victims receive top quality services at all levels of our criminal justice system.



State Office of Victim Assistance
Edgar Brown Building, Room 401
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Phone: 803.734.1900
Fax: 803.734.1708

Victims' Line: 1.800.220.5370
(8am - 5pm, M - F)

www.govoepp.state.sc.us/sova

SOVA



SOUTH CAROLINA
State Office of
Victim Assistance

Rooted in *justice*
Guided by *law*
Propelled by *humanity*

Who we are...

Who we are ...

The State Office of Victim Assistance is committed to providing comfort, assistance and guidance to victims of crime and service providers throughout the state. Government is about leadership, and this office is uniquely equipped to provide just that through the Crime Victims' Compensation Fund. SOVA shares the responsibility in making sure victims get the help they need and are treated with respect and dignity.

We have provided assistance to many thousands of victims of crime for over 20 years. SOVA staff are dedicated to providing assistance in a manner where individuals will not have to relive the pain which caused them to initially contact SOVA. It is our goal to ensure that the privacy, dignity and general well-being of victims of crime are protected and respected during this process.

Those who prey on innocent citizens must be held accountable through the course of the criminal justice system and should be punished accordingly. As traumatic and painful as it may be, in order to ensure justice for all, victims of crime must be willing to participate in the criminal justice process in order for the perpetrator to receive the just punishment. It is during this most difficult period of time that court advocates and SOVA can be a comfort to those of you who are suffering.

While we hope that you or someone you love will never become a victim of crime, in the event that you do, we ask that you contact this office immediately so that we can help begin the healing process.

Enabling Legislation

SECTION 14-1-203 ~ SECTION 14-1-208

Describes the various courts in the South Carolina Court System (Magistrate, General Sessions, Family and Municipal) and how money is flowed from these courts to help fund SOVA.

SECTION 16-3-1110 ~ SECTION 16-3-1350

Spells out the legal definitions of crime and award, eligibility process and awarding claims.

SECTION 16-3-1400 ~ SECTION 16-3-1420

Introduces the Victim/Witness Assistance program at SOVA (additional law in SECTION 16-3-1505 ~ SECTION 16-3-1565)

Find complete SC Code of Laws at:
www.scstatehouse.net

SOVA: www.govoepp.state.us/sc/sova

SOVA FACTS

- The SC Victims' Compensation Fund was established in 1982 under the Worker's Compensation Fund to provide financial aid to innocent victims of crime and their eligible dependants.
- SOVA is primarily funded by the fines, fees and assessments paid by criminals to the courts.
- The SOVA Training Team travels the state, bringing free seminars to law enforcement, advocates, victim service and health care professionals, educators and civic groups.
- 34 employees in six total departments make up the SOVA staff.

Victims' Compensation Fund

SOVA can help with certain types of crime related costs. In every case, the expense has to be linked to losses from injury or death as a result of the crime.

Up to a combined total of \$15,000 for:

Medical Costs

- Doctor ordered medicine, equipment, supplies, and treatment
- Dental or orthodontic work
- Other costs such as physical rehabilitation, reconstructive surgery, and transportation to doctor appointments

Counseling (from a licensed professional)

- Counselor must confirm that trauma resulted from the crime
- 20 sessions spread over a period of time; any number of sessions within 180 days from the first session; or 180 inpatient days at a mental hospital/facility, whichever amount you (the victim) need most
- Payment amount is on a set fee schedule which is similar to an insurance company scale

Burial Bills for a Deceased Victim

- Reimbursement limit is \$4000
- Certain funeral items may not be covered
- Copy of death certificate is required

Lost Wages / Loss of Support

- If you have lost financial support because you or the household wage-earner has been out of work for over two weeks, then you may be eligible for lost wages or lost support payments
- You may be eligible if you are the victim or the victim's dependent or spouse
- You may be eligible to receive up to two-thirds of the average weekly wages

Please call us at (803) 734-1900 to discuss how to safely handle this option for you.